



IT HELPS, NOW AND THEN

A prayer by Archbishop Oscar A. Romero

The Church would be betraying its own love of God and faithfulness to the Gospel if it were to stop being the voice of those who have no voice, the defender of the rights of the poor...this requires a greater insertion into the life of the poor with whom the Church should place itself in solidarity, even to the point of accepting their risks and their destiny."

It helps, now and then, to step back
and take a long view.

The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts;
it is even beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction
of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.
Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying
that the kingdom always lies beyond us.
No statement says all that could be said.
No prayer fully expresses our faith.
No confession brings perfection.
No pastoral visit brings wholeness.
No program accomplishes the church's mission.
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about.
We plant the seeds that one day will grow.
We water seeds already planted,
knowing that they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.
We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation
in realizing that. This enables us to do something,
and to do it very well. It may be incomplete,
but it is a beginning, a step along the way,
an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the difference
between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future not our own.

Amen.